1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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means 'the earth-place'; *kadri* is the Bison-horn word for *kasyeq*, the knife carried in the loin-cloth, and the *perma* is sometimes called the *kadri-gaita*. *Wijj-erhu* means 'seed-*mahua*'; in most Bison-horn villages there is a sacred *mahua* tree, instead of the *saja* tree that is the rule in hill villages, in the middle of the sacred field, and the tree is the 'seed-*mahua*' because beneath it are held the ceremonies of the important '*Wijja* (seed) *Pandum*'. The *saja* tree remains equally sacred, as will be observed from the way in which its leaves are used in the ceremonies described in the next chapter. Under or near the *mahua* tree is often a wooden post or an upright cube of stone with a sloping top, known generally as Bhimul, which is made as occasion demands to serve as Bhimul Deo, Tallin Uchur, Dongar Deo, Mata, or any other god required; near this the *perma* will clean and plaster a flat piece of ground, known as *khari-mundi*, for sacrificing the victims. Dongar Deo, Kodo Deo and Bhu-deo combined with Bhu-devi and called generally by the Bison-horn Marias of Sukma zamindari Polamraj and Polam-muttai, are all really forms of the Village Mother, or at least of the Earth; there are several other such forms, and, though all are fundamentally the same, they tend gradually to be vaguely differentiated in the minds of the villagers, and soon, no doubt, will be individual godlings, each with his own functions. Bhimul is the rain-giver, who has been Hinduized amongst Central Provinces Gonds and the Murias of the north of Bastar as Bhimsen or Bhima, one of the five Pandava brothers; besides his annual *pandum* in the early spring, he is liable to be treated roughly if the rains are late or scanty. His wooden or stone post is then pelted with dung and filth by abusive females, who challenge him to show his powers by sending his rain to wash himself clean.

Demons

The Bison-horn Marias go much farther than the Hill Marias in deifying the forces of nature. There are the Ban Devi spirits of the forest, Jalkamani the spirit of rivers, and, for nearly every mountain pass, pile of boulders, or precipice, some spirit, all of whom may need propitiation, and some of whom are becoming godlings with a cult. The Hill Marias have a vague dread of evil spirits of the mountains, which they call *rau*; amongst the Murias and Bhattras there are other demons such as Uran Rau who blows away the grain with the chaff at winnowing, and Chitkar Rau who brings wild animals to trample down the crops; but the only *rau* to whom I have heard a name given by Hill Marias is Raja Rau, the demon of the Raughat pass in Antagarh tahsil, held to be a very Raja of the *rau* because he caused mountain-sickness to the first European surveyor seen in Bastar. All Marias also speak with fear of a water-witch in the

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form of a great serpent, known as *Tondetaras*, haunting river rapids and waterfalls, the mere sight of whom is fatal.

The traces of totemism amongst Hill and Bison-horn Marias will be described in the chapter on social organization. It may briefly be stated here that there appears to be no connexion between the totems and the clan-god, and that at no ceremony, either clan or village, or domestic, is the totem ever mentioned or worshipped. It gets a vague respect, perhaps an occasional *salaam*, from members of the totem, and they do not touch, kill or eat it if they can avoid doing so.

Totems